

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

The College supports the continuous learning efforts of regular, full-time, non-faculty employees through supplemental educational courses and programs of study. In doing so, the College recognizes an individual's need for professional growth and honors the staff member's good work at the College. Within the parameters of available funding, the support of advanced learning for employees also builds organizational capacity and enhances the work of the College.

Eligibility

Staff employees who meet each of the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- employees with one year or more of full-time employment at the College;
- employees with a current satisfactory performance review on file; and
- employees who are seeking to enroll in credit-bearing courses that are determined to be work-related by the employee, the employee's immediate supervisor, and the divisional Vice President.

Eligible Higher Education Institutions

When possible, employees should take approved courses at **Berea College** or **Eastern Kentucky University (EKU)**. If the necessary coursework is NOT available at either Berea College or EKU, employees may request approval to take coursework at any Kentucky public university or community college. In the event the coursework IS available at Berea or EKU, but, due to compelling circumstances, the employee and supervisor agree coursework at another eligible institution is a better fit for the employee and department, such coursework can be reimbursed subject to the maximum credit and dollar limitations of the policy.

Procedures for Approval

1. Identify an appropriate course and determine through the Registrar if the course is offered at Berea College. If not, determine if the course is offered at EKU.
2. If neither Berea nor EKU offers the course, determine at which Kentucky public institution it is offered.
3. Once the course is identified, a meeting to discuss your interest, the course, the time commitment to attend, and how the course will benefit your work at the College must be arranged with your immediate supervisor.
4. If the supervisor approves your request, the request must then be submitted to your divisional Vice President for approval.
5. After supervisor and Vice President approval is granted, the next step is to apply for admission to the identified institution. (Applying for tuition reimbursement is independent of the admission and registration process.)
6. Once admitted, submit to Human Resources a completed Request for Tuition Reimbursement Form, as well as the registration receipt you receive for one 3- or 4-hour course per academic term. Requests must be submitted to Human Resources at least thirty (30) days in advance of the academic term.

Maximum Credit and Reimbursement Guidelines

- If the above eligibility and approval procedures are met, an employee may be permitted to take one course per semester (3-4 semester hours per semester or up to a maximum of 6-8 semester hours in a calendar year).

- If the course is taken during normal business hours, scheduling of classes and making up time may be approved by the employee's department head or immediate supervisor and by the divisional Vice President, provided that this shall not compromise the efficiency of the department as determined by the divisional Vice President.
- If the course is taken during normal business hours, all time away from the job as a result of this policy shall be made up within the regular work week, resulting in no loss of time for which the employee is paid.
- Reimbursement is typically limited to two semesters (spring and fall) per calendar year. One semester plus a summer session (not to exceed 4 semester hours) may be permitted if summer coursework is more appropriate for the employee's work schedule, upon approval of the supervisor and divisional Vice President.
- The maximum reimbursement provided per person per calendar year is \$2,600.
- Employees receiving financial aid other than loans may be eligible for a portion of the tuition reimbursement dependent on the level of aid received. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Vice President. Employees must list any aid received on the Request for Tuition Reimbursement Form.
- Reimbursement is limited to the actual coursework and does not apply to books or other fees associated with the course.
- Any taxation of tuition reimbursement amounts received will be governed by applicable state and federal tax laws; all tax liability will be the responsibility of the employee.
- Maintenance matriculation credits (e.g., for dissertation completion) will not be approved.
- This benefit is not available for audited or non-credit coursework.

Obligations and Repayment

- A cash advance in the amount of the tuition will be given to employees who have received approval and registered for a class. The cash advance will be put on the employee's personal accounts receivable (AR) with the College and will not be cleared until the employee provides adequate documentation that the course was completed in a satisfactory manner of attaining a "C" or better in the course for which they have been reimbursed. The time between receiving the cash advance and AR clearance normally should be no more than four months.
- If the employee does not provide documentation that the course was completed in a satisfactory manner within four months of receiving the cash advance and AR clearance, the College will payroll deduct the amount of the tuition reimbursement.
- Should an employee either drop a course or fail to attain a "C" or better in a course for which reimbursement has been provided, the employee is required to make prompt repayment arrangements through the Office of Financial Affairs. Further, no additional courses will be authorized until full repayment has been made.
- By accepting reimbursement for coursework, the employee is agreeing to remain available for employment at the College for a minimum of six (6) months following the end of the academic term for which reimbursement was provided.
- If an employee's employment is terminated prior to the first day of classes, any previously approved tuition reimbursement shall not be honored.

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